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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/578,414

05/05/2006

Fridtjof Stein

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6995

41288

7590

03/17/2009

PATENT CENTRAL LLC
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EXAMINER

CHAWAN, SHEELA C

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2624

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

03/17/2009

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/578,414	Applicant(s) STEIN, FRIDTJOF	
	Examiner SHEELA C. CHAWAN	Art Unit 2624	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 May 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-15 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-15 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 05 May 2006 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>5/5/06</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Priority

1. Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Preliminary Amendment

2. Preliminary Amendment filed on 5/5/06 has been entered.
Claim 15 is new claim .
Claims 1- 10, 11-15 are pending in the application

Information Disclosure Statement

3. The information disclosure statement (IDS) submitted on 5/5/06, the information disclosure statement is being considered by the examiner.

Drawings

4. The Examiner has approved drawings filed on 5/5/06.

Claim Objections

5. Claims 1 and 15 is objected to because of the following informalities:
In claim 1, line 5, recites, "operator in such a manner". it is not clear that "such" a phrase should not be in the claims.

Similarly claim 15 needs to be corrected .

In claim 1, line 6, change ",", to -- ; -- .

In claim 1, line 9, change ",", to -- ; -- .

Similarly claims 4, 11 and 15 needs to be corrected .

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

6. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

The USPTO "Interim Guidelines for Examination of Patent Applications for Patent Subject Matter Eligibility" (Official Gazette notice of 22 November 2005), Annex IV, reads as follows:

Nonfunctional descriptive material that does not constitute a statutory process, machine, manufacture or composition of matter and should be rejected under 35 U.S.C. Sec. 101. Certain types of descriptive material, such as music, literature, art, photographs and mere arrangements or compilations of facts or data, without any functional interrelationship is not a process, machine, manufacture or composition of matter. USPTO personnel should be prudent in applying the foregoing guidance. Nonfunctional descriptive material may be claimed in combination with other functional descriptive multi-media material on a computer-readable medium to provide the necessary functional and structural interrelationship to satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. Sec. 101. The presence of the claimed nonfunctional descriptive material is not necessarily determinative of nonstatutory subject matter. For example, a computer that recognizes a particular grouping of musical notes read from memory and upon recognizing that particular sequence, causes another defined series of notes to be played, defines a functional interrelationship among that data and the computing processes performed when utilizing that data, and as such is statutory because it implements a statutory process.

Claim(s) 1- 10, 14 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter as follows. Claims 1 and 15, recites a first step transforming image data set with a signature operator that for each pixel a signature strings is computed and recorded in a signature table with pixel coordinates, checking the entries in the two signature tables with respect to signature strings exits which can be found in both tables and generating a correspondence hypothesis for the coordinates associated with signature strings and storing hypothesis list for further processing which does not impart functionality to a computer or computing device, and is thus considered nonfunctional descriptive material. Such nonfunctional descriptive material, in the absence of a functional interrelationship with a computer, does not constitute a statutory process, machine, manufacture or composition of matter and is

thus non-statutory per se. Non-functional descriptive is non-statutory regardless of whether it is claimed as residing on a computer readable medium.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

7. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1 and 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claim 1, line 7 the phrase “the other image”, as recited vague and unclear, what is being implied by phrase “the other image”.

In claim 1, line 11 the phrase “these cases” what all these cases referring to.

Similarly claim 15 needs to be corrected.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

8. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claim 13, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

1. 112, 2nd Paragraph:

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Products (e.g., machines and manufactures) must distinguish over the prior art in terms of their structure (or structure + structure's function when claimed functionally) rather than function alone (MPEP 2114). Therefore, an "apparatus" that has no structural limitations at all violates 112, 2nd paragraph, in that it fails to "particularly point out and distinctly claim ...".

2. 112, 1st Paragraph – Single Means Claim:

A single claimed structural element that performs a multitude of functions, where the functions are disclosed as being performed by separate structural elements violates the 112, 1st paragraph enablement requirement. That is, a single means claim which covered every conceivable means for achieving the stated purpose was held nonenabling for the scope of the claim because the specification disclosed at most only those means known to the inventor (In re Hyatt, 708 F.2d 712, 714-715, 218 USPQ 195, 197 (Fed. Cir. 1983)).

Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112 first and second paragraphs as attempting to define a product (i.e., machine or apparatus) entirely by virtue of its function, in the absence of any recited structure.

Products must distinguish over the prior art in terms of their structure (or structure + structure's function when claimed functionally) rather than function alone (MPEP 2114). Therefore, an "apparatus" not having structural limitations fails to "particularly point out and distinctly claim ..." the invention in accordance with 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph.

Furthermore, while the specification disclosure may be enabling for a plurality of structural elements performing the claimed functions [1], the specification does not reasonably provide enablement for a single structural element (or no structural elements) performing all of the claimed functions. That is, given the claim in question, the specification does not enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or

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with which it is most nearly connected, to make the invention commensurate in scope with these claims (“A single means claim, i.e., where a means recitation does not appear in combination with another recited element of means, is subject to an undue breadth rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph” because a single means claim covers “every conceivable means for achieving the stated purpose” and “the specification disclosed at most only those means known to the inventor” - *MPEP*, at *paragraph 2164.08(a)*).

Applicant is advised to define the apparatus by virtue of the individual structural element that serve to perform the individual functions recited in the corresponding method claim.

[1] Even when an apparatus is disclosed as being computer implemented (e.g., software implemented on hardware), the requirement remains that there be some structure recited in the body of the claim (e.g., a processor and a memory storing a program which when implemented performs the method steps). For purposes of “means plus function” language, individual disclosed steps corresponding to computer program elements operating on a processor (e.g., inputting, filtering, detecting and resolving) may be considered as separate means (*Dossel*, 115 F.3d at 946–47, 42 USPQ2d at 1885).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

9. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

Claims 1- 10, 14 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 as not falling within one of the four statutory categories of invention. Supreme Court precedent¹ and recent Federal Circuit decisions² indicate that **a statutory “process” under 35 U.S.C. 101** must **(1)** be tied to a machine or **(2)** transform underlying subject matter (such as an article or material) to a different state or thing. While the instant claims recite a series of steps or acts to be performed, the claims neither transform underlying subject matter nor are positively tied to another statutory category that accomplishes the claimed method steps, and therefore does not qualify as a statutory process. The recited steps of **“ a first step transforming the image data set with a signature operator that for each pixel a signature strings is computed and recorded in a signature table with pixel coordinates, checking the entries in the two signature tables with respect to signature strings exits which can be found in both tables and generating a correspondence hypothesis for the coordinates associated with signature strings and storing hypothesis list for further processing ”** neither transform underlying subject matter nor positively tie to a machine that accomplished the claimed method stpes. In order for process to be "tied" to a machine, the structure of a machine should be positively recited in a step or steps significant to the basic inventive concept, and NOT just in association with statements or intended use or purpose, insignificant pre or post solution explicitly, or implicitly.

Appropriate correction is required.

¹ *Diamond v. Diehr*, 450 U.S. 175, 184 (1981); *Parker v. Flook*, 437 U.S. 584, 588 n.9 (1978); *Gottschalk v. Benson*, 409 U.S. 63, 70 (1972); *Cochrane v. Deener*, 94 U.S. 780, 787-88 (1876).

Other prior art cited

10. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Damerau (US.5,390,359) discloses storing and retrieving records in a computer system.

Powell et al., (US.6,072,888) discloses method for image encoding.

Powell et al., (US. 5,809,160) discloses method for encoding auxiliary data within a source signal.

² *In re Bilski*, 88 USPQ2d 1385 (Fed. Cir. 2008).

Contact Information

11. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Sheela C Chawan whose telephone number is. 571-272-7446. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Thursday 7.30 - 6.00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Brain Werner can be reached on 571-272-7041. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). if you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800 – 786-9199) IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Sheela C Chawan/

3/13/09

Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2624

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